

THE ISNEG LIFE CYCLE. I. BIRTH, EDUCATION, AND DAILY ROUTINE

By MORICE VANOVERBERGH, C.I.C.M.

Mountain Province, Philippine Islands

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¹ On the habitat of the Isneg of the subprovince of Apayaw, Mountain Province, Northern Luzon, Philippine Islands, see details in M. Vanoverbergh; *The Isneg*, *PUBL. CATH. ANTHROP. CONF.*, 1932, v. 3, no. 1, esp. pp. 35-57, map, p. 51: on Isneg language, with phonetic key, *ibid.*, pp. 3-14. [Since writing and forwarding the manuscript of the present paper, Father Vanoverbergh has discovered that what he previously had called the G branch of the O dialect of Isneg is in reality two separate branches which he is now calling the Bayag branch (abbrev. B), spoken in the municipal district of Bayag, and the Abbil (abbrev. A) branch, spoken in the municipal district of Namaltugan. So he is eliminating G and substituting B and A. Detailed data on B and A, received from Father Vanoverbergh since the receipt of this manuscript, will be published shortly.—Ed.] In native words used in the present paper the accent (') is placed over, instead of after, the accented vowel. Accented n (ñ), however, denotes, not accent, but the ng sound in English "bring".

869 latter to conduct a similar ceremony or to assist her elders at the same, the only aid she will get from some experienced shaman will be an occasional hint as to what she has to do. In general, however, she will already have learned these things on previous occasions, so that she simply imitates now what she has often seen before. The explanations given previously by the older shamans with reference to the meaning of these ceremonies will of course have helped her the better to impress everything upon her memory.

869 I have been told very positively that the prayers or formulas, which
782 are recited on certain occasions, especially in cases of sickness, are
788 never the subject of any direct teaching on the part of the shaman. It is true that the number of Isneg prayers is comparatively small, and that, in general, Isneg recitations, whether in prayer or song, are far from being stereotyped. Some of them; however, especially some formulas more or less in verse or rhyme, which are recited by the shamans while they extract the cause of sickness in the form of iron, herbs, etc., from the body of a sick person, are rather complicated, and as far as I know, of a certain stable and less variable nature.

869 Now how aspirant *dornrákit* are able to learn them without receiving formal instruction, I should say even often repeated instruction, is more or less of a puzzle to me, the more so that these formulas are rarely pronounced distinctly and that many of the terms have become obsolete and are actually meaningless to the natives. Nevertheless, I repeat it, it was told me most positively that they are not taught, that they are simply listened to and picked up. Perhaps what seems very indistinct to outsiders is much less so to the initiated, and probably the rhythm and rhyme help the younger shamans to learn these recitations by heart without too much difficulty. Besides, I know from personal experience that the same regular sequence of sentences or verses is rarely adhered to. Whenever I have tried to write down some of these formulas at the dictation of a shaman, my informant almost invariably inverted the order of the sentences at a second recitation; these women often made me quite nervous, as it was well nigh impossible to write down exactly what they had been reciting. Isneg shamans always talk very quickly when reciting from memory, so I had very often to ask them to repeat a certain part, after I had written down as correctly as possible one or more catch phrases of each verse or sentence; but their second recitation almost never coincided with the first one. Such a state of affairs, of course, makes the task of the recorder doubly difficult, although, it may happen to

APPENDIX

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SCHEMA II

Passing the mountains between Bayag and Kabugaw

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(B) Bayag:	<i>makbisi-</i>	<i>agorup</i>	<i>xoró</i>
(M) Dangla:	<i>magbisi-</i>	<i>ayorup</i> ²	<i>oó</i>
(M) Kabugaw:	<i>magbisi-</i>	<i>arorup</i>	<i>oó</i>
(M) Tawit:	<i>magbisi</i>	<i>arorup</i> ¹	<i>oó</i>

In this connection I should like to warn the reader that the text of a given informant does not always and in every particular render faithfully his own special dialect or branch of a dialect, and this for the following reasons:

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1. On the part of the informant:

Communication between the different parts of the subprovince is increasing at a rapid pace; and so, except for old women (who are rarely available informants for investigators) and a few exceptionally backward persons (from whom no reliable information can be obtained), the Isneg tends to adopt, at least occasionally, a pronunciation which is not strictly his own. At first, marriage and marriage ceremonies were almost the only means of bringing together persons who pronounced their gutturals in a different way. Later on, however, more extensive travelling brought male representatives of every district into contact with one another. This was mostly due to the gradual elimination of headhunting raids and, although in a less marked degree, to the building of better roads. Now again, with the opening of schools in the larger centers and the introduction of compulsory education, boys and girls flock together from all parts of the subprovince, and differences in pronunciation tend to become obliterated, or rather, the language actually spoken by most of them offers to the ear a confused medley of gutturals.

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[721]
[491]

Besides, an educated Isneg, and, incidentally, a good many others who can lay no claim to education, very often affect the use of Iloko words and sentences, pronounced as in Iloko (*x* none, glottal catch rare), or at least affect the pronunciation of the gutturals as in Iloko, although using pure Isneg words.

² This is the *y* of the Anthropos alphabet. For the sake of uniformity, however, and to avoid confusion (as we use the sign *y* for another consonant), we always write *x* for all texts in M of the O dialect, even for those that originated in Dangla and surrounding villages.

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197 2. On my own part:

126 In my dealings with the Isneg I use the Main branch of the O dialect, while in writing I use the K branch for reasons given before.^{*} So it may have happened that, in writing down texts, my own ordinary use of M has influenced me to write down a given word as I myself would have pronounced it, or my use of K in writing has caused me to put down K's where they were absent in the informant's pronunciation.

Nevertheless I have always tried to write down texts as faithfully as possible, and now I start publishing them as I have them, without trying to correct anything, even though an occasional guttural that appears in a given term does not belong to the correct language of a given informant.

The above warning is given here once for all, and it refers to all Isneg texts that I shall publish in the future.

TEXT I

[584] This text is a continuous dialogue between a boy and the girl he
 [115] goes to court for the first time. My informant is Baydan from Tawit (M), and he calls it *maibabbdy*, "courting the girls".

- 539 1. *Lalai: iápugnô-man ikôw ta adâ kanô ya mamâmmo a nânda.*
*Babbdy: ôwân pañalakkânta ka mamâ na ôñzan balâi.**
2. *L.: nâmmo ôy pagdamadâmagda na nagsintiñde ka mamâ.*
B.: dila mazañgâm no mapoonâ nam ôy.
3. *L.: mañuwâ pagkâ-kiyâ atân kammalanin simpapadân.*
B.: turâña mañuwâ ka ibaldymo ka asitôlâymo.
4. *L.: dika mañalunib kiyâ ittô ya nâñko.*
B.: zapô walâ ranâ ta ummânta kiddi ya agdalidâñta na dadûma.

*Op. cit., 14.

192 ^{*}*ikôw*, sometimes pronounced *kaw*, which literally means "you", and which I render by "you", is a little term which is very hard to translate. The Isneg use it all the time, and always in the form *ikôw*, although when it stands for the personal pronoun, those who use the Main branch pronounce *iaw*. Here thus it stands for something like "come on now", "what is the matter", but it changes its shade of meaning with every context.

^{*}*balâi* is a term used with affection; the real ordinary word is *babbdy*; *balâi* is made to look similar to *lalâi*, "man".

536 is rather monotonous and at other times becomes excitingly thrilling, according to the drift of the story.

538 In order to follow the tune, the narrator will often
522 draw out the end of some words or maybe add meaningless syllables. There are many repetitions of action and thought, as well as inconsequential happenings. Incongruities of action and sudden transitions of scene often occur. Once in awhile the narrative is broken by some ludicrous incident just as you have clowning in a drama. The greater pleasure is not so much in following the development of the plot of the story as it is in the delightful manner of the telling. Yet the plot is interesting, being often based on some
[513] practical joke. Listening to such a story is really a very happy way to spend an otherwise dull time. Sometimes the people stay up all night and listen to them.

● 126 However, if one wrote down every syllable which the story teller uttered in narrating one story, he would have a book which very few people would care to read. Therefore most of the folk tales in this little collection are written in the short way. With some, the popular dialect used (sometimes ungrammatically) is also given. The English following is a free translation. Sometimes two versions of a story are given.

121 Some students make distinction between myths
538 and folktales. But the people have only one name,
773 *adodit*, for both; and as a matter of fact, there are
776 few folktales which do not have a religious element. In the early days the main distinction between *anitos* and men was that they lived in a different place: the only physical difference being that the female *anitos* had only one breast which was in the center of their